Funds for development of NER

*525. SHRI LALIT SURI: Will the Minister of DEVELOPMENT OF NORTH EASTERN REGION be pleased to state:

(a) the funds released by Government for the development of North-Eastern Region during the last three years ending the 31st March, 2005, area-wise and scheme-wise;

(b) the funds actually utilized, year-wise, area-wise and scheme-wise; and

(c) the reasons and explanation given by the State authorities for non-utilization of the allotted funds?

THE MINISTER OF DEVELOPMENT OF NORTH EASTERN REGION (SHRI P.K. KYNDIAH): (a) to (c) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) and (b) The Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region sanctions projects and releases funds for the development of socio-economic infrastructure in the North Eastern Region under the scheme of NLCPR. In addition, funds are also sanctioned and released for the development of similar projects in the Region by the North Eastern Council (NEC). State-wise details of funds released by M/DoNER under NLCPR and their utilization during the last three years ending 31st March 2005 are given as under:

(Amount in crore rupees)

State	2002-2003		2003-2004		2004-2005	
	Amount Released*	Amount Utilized@	Amount Released*	Amount Utilized@	Amount Released*	Amount Utilized@
Arunachal Pradesh	52.56	45.25	61.19	46.49	39.43	37.99
Assam	140.07	113.63	113.94	80.00	249.07	83.44
Manipur	74.93	19.17	18.05	52.41	58.98	34.91
Meghalaya	23.77	22.73	49.99	16.83	21.71	45.49
Mizoram	83.43	49.94	99.55	35.41	42.38	22.45
Nagaland	70.85	75.71	84.17	78.30	73.06	60.61
Sikkim	44.19	39.58	53.24	48.81	59.75	74.12
Tripura	60.11	55.40	69.87	78.69	105.62	85.47
TOTAL:	550.00	421.41	550.00	436.94	650.00	444.48

*Source: Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region
@Source: Information received from State Governments

The details of funds released to the State Governments, other Regional Institutes and agencies including NGOs and their utilization in respect of NEC during the last three years are given below:—

(Amount in crore rupees)

State	Amount Released			Total Amount 2002-03 to 2004-05	Amount Utilized
	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005		
Arunachal Pradesh	36.63	41.17	33.31	111.11	96.00
Assam	83.31	154.54	122.92	360.77	288.77
Manipur	10.23	11.36	20.10	41.69	28.68
Meghalaya	19.97	16.07	21.94	57.98	52.98
Mizoram	16.48	24.16	50.62	91.26	43.91
Nagaland	28.55	32.45	20.92	81.92	67.82
Sikkim	—	13.67	23.98	37.65	34.65
Tripura	60.57	28.81	30.59	119.97	100.97
Other Regional Institutes & Agencies	185.80	175.39	175.58	536.77	493.83
TOTAL:	441.54	497.62	499.96	1439.12	1207.61

(c) The State Governments have furnished several reasons for underutilization of funds for projects of which main reasons are as follows:

(i) Due to weather and climatic conditions existing in the North Eastern Region the actual working season for construction activity is limited between September-April/May.

(ii) Difficulty in executing the works due to topography.

(iii) Delay in statutory clearances such as forest clearance, etc.

(iv) Inadequate response to Notice Inviting Tenders.

(v) Procedural requirements in inviting and finalisation of tenders and a warding of work to the contractors.

(vi) Disputes in land acquisition etc.

SHRI LALIT SURI: Mr. Chairman, Sir, this particular region has been neglected and has been under-developed. In the answer which the hon. Minister has given, he has stated various regions where the amounts have been sanctioned but they have been unutilised. He has also given the reasons, which can be corrected. I would like to know from the hon. Minister how he will correct so that all the money, which is sanctioned, is properly utilised and how he can also enhance the amounts which have to be sanctioned so that these places are properly developed.

SHRI P.R. KYNDIAH: Mr. Chairman, Sir, it is true that the North-Eastern Region is suffering from many disadvantages. But I would like to submit that there are two questions, which relate to us. One is about the amount which has been sanctioned and whether that has been fully utilised. Utility, as you could see from the papers that I have given, that is clearly there. But there are a few gaps. There are problems in the North-East. Number one is the topography of the area, which just takes time. Seasonal changes in the North-East is one of the reasons for the delay in the implementation of the projects. This is one reason. The second thing is that it does take time, apart from implementation, to see that the projects are prepared. This is one matter, which is very important. But I agree with the hon. Member when he asked about the fund position of the North-Eastern Region. We have two channels through which we disburse money. One is the DONER, through NLCPR, the Non-Lapsable Central Pool Resources. The Budget is of about Rs. 650 crores. Out of Rs. 650 crores, Rs. 100 crores go to the Bodo tribal territory. The second is NEC, the North-Eastrn Council, with Rs. 500 crores. We are already taking it up with the Planning Commission for increasing the Budget particularly in view of the fact that the NEC today is now transformed into a regional planning body.

SHRI LALIT SURI: My second supplementary is about the funds which are utilised. I would like to know from the hon. Minister what is mechanism through which they monitor that proper utilisation of these funds is being done. There are certain reports, which say that proper utilisation of funds is not being done and most of the projects are on paper and not actually happening.

SHRI P.R. KYNDIAH: Mr. Chairman, Sir, there are alleged reports about pilferage of funds. We get reports, but not officially. But we do recognise the fact that the North-Eastern Region is such a part of the country, which is infested with insurgency. We are also aware of that. In so far as this

question that is raised by the hon. Member is concerned, we are having a system of regular monitoring and review of the projects so sanctioned and how far they are implemented as the ground level. We have a system by which we will try to do away with all these legal aspects.

SHRI DWIJENDRA NATH SHARMAH: Sir, hon. Minister has given a reply on the utilization of funds by DoNER for the last three years. The purpose of DoNER Ministry is very good but what we have seen is that the purpose is not properly felt in the North-Eastern Region. May I know from the Hon. Minister as to how many schemes and projects are lying with the DoNER Ministry for sanction and what is the position of Non-Lapsable Central Pool Fund that the DoNER Ministry has of today.

SHRI P.R. KYNDIAH: Chairman, Sir, there are a number of projects which are still lying in the Ministry and we are examining it. I will give you the details later but there are many which are being considered and examined by the Ministry. But I can tell the Member so that he would appreciate the problem. Now the procedures that we adopt today is that various States submit a set of projects for a particular year the projects are sent over the concept paper. These papers are examined by the Ministry on the basis of which we retain the projects and those projects which are retained are being sent to the State Governments to give their DPR, Detailed Project Report. The projects are examined by a high-powered Committee which is under the Chairmanship of the Secretary of my Ministry. After that, they are sent to the State again for revised Detailed Project Report. So it does take time. Therefore, we do it year by year. Now, let me also inform the Member that as of now it keeps on increasing. We have 60 projects which are under consideration. But more than that, there are about four States which are yet to send their final priority projects. So we are having prioritised projects from the States and we consider those projects.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri Matilal Sarkar.

SHRI DWIJENDRA NATH SHARMAH: Sir,...

श्री सभापति: आपके प्रश्न का जवाब नहीं आया, यह मैं मानता हूं, लेकिन क्या करूं?

SHRI DWIJENDRA NATH SHARMAH: Sir, the important part is not dealt with. I asked what is the fund position of non-lapsable pool of fund as of today, which is the DoNER. That has not been replied to.

SHRI P.R. KYNDIAH: Would you like to know...

SHRI DWIJENDRA NATH SHARMAH: DoNER is having non-lapsale pool of funds. It accumulates. I want to know what is the position of funds as of today with the DoNER on that non-labsable pool of funds.

SHRI P.R. KYNDIAH: It is a continuous process. Even when we have sanctioned the amount, we do not give the amount fully. We give it in three instalments - first instalment, second instalment and the third instalment. Therefore it is very difficult to say how much money is given away. But we do from year to year. We have Rs. 650 crores, out of which, Rs. 100 crores are given to the Bodo Tribal Trade Union Council. We have Rs. 550 crores. This is a continuous process. We cannot exactly say how much.

SHRI MATILAL SARKAR: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the hon. Minister has given in his written reply some reasons as to why there is a lot of under utilization. There are other reasons which are not mentioned here. So, I would like to know from the hon. Minister what sort of help and what sort of steps the Union Government has proposed to take to help the State Governments in the North-East so that the hurdles, due to insurgency, forest clearance, procedural requirements and connected seasonal disadvantages, which are standing in the way of utilization of funds, are removed or minimized.

SHRI P.R. KYNDIAH: Sir, this is a very good question. In fact, I only wish to inform the hon. Member that we are taking pro-active steps, in a sense, that we inform the State Government about the problems, we send our officers to States in order to know where exactly the problem lies so that we can take corrective steps. We are working in tandem with the State Governments.

SHRI MATILAL SARKAR: What monitoring mechanism do you have?

SHRI P.R. KYNDIAH: We are doing it. We try to sort it out of if there is any problem with the State Governments. We also send our officials.

SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE: Sir, I want to know the position of the North-Eastern Region. There are two wings - NEC and the DoNER - in the Government of India. But, it is very unfortunate that the hon. Minister in his reply said that the State Governments are liable for submission of Utilisation Certificates. So, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether the Minister has taken any steps to monitor these things. You

in his reply said that the State Governments are liable for submission of Utilisation Certificates. So, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether the Minister has taken any steps to monitor these things. You cannot deny that there are enough funds with the NEC and the DoNER. The hon. Minister is the Chairman for both. So I want to know how the Minister is planning to utilize the money. In his reply the Minister is saying that there is a problem due to topography, climate conditions and also other reasons. We are not denying all these things. Now, the Government and the hon. Prime Minister are giving much emphasis on the North-Eastern Region. Sir, every Member of this House wants that this money should be utilized. So, I want to know from the hon. Minister whether the Minister is going to set up any agency to monitor this. Sir, our UPA Government has taken a new decision to utilize this money in a proper way. So, are you going to set up any agency or have any mechanism for utilization of these funds?

SHRI P.R. KYNDIAH: Sir, this question relates to implementation of the programmes. We are taking all steps to see that the money is utilized. I could inform the House that once we sanction the amount our officers, also see whether work at the ground level - it is not just outlay but it is the output - the work is commensurate, at least 75 per cent, with the money allocated so that we can release the second instalment. But, if they have any problem somewhere, we are always helping the State Governments from time to time. This is the position.

SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI: Sir, when Rajiv Gandhi was the Prime Minister, an accord was signed by the Union Government with the representatives of the Assam Movement. This Accord is called the Assam Accord. In pursuance of this, a lot of projects were to be taken up and one of the projects is gas cracker. So, I want to know from the hon. Minister what is the position of the gas cracker, what is the position of the Assam Accord and how many decisions have so far been implemented. If not, what is the time schedule within which they will be implemented.

SHRI P.R. KYNDIAH: Sir, this supplementary does not arise out of the main question. So, I need a separate notice for this.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Everything is different.

* 526. [The questioner (Shrimati Maya Singh) was absent. For answer *vide* page. 30].

* 527. [The questioners (Shri Raj Mohinder Singh Mazitha and Shri Ram Jethmalani) were absent. For answer *vide* page. 31].